

## MARYLAND GAZETTE.

*Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.*

WEDNESDAY, June 5, 1751.

From a late LONDON GAZETTEER.

To the FOOL.

Mr. FOOL,

**T**HE celebrated Mr. Pope says, What Folly we have will buoy up one Time or another; that a little is necessary; and that it is foolish to conceal it. Having so good an Authority, I shall give you a Specimen of mine: Perhaps you may be so indulgent as to publish it to the Brotherhood, if you in your great Folly, should think it deserving; if not, I am pleased with venting it to the Head of the Family.

We live an Age wherein Religion and Virtue is laughed out of Countenance, and Vice struts in Triumph; nay, who dare be less wicked than the rest? An Instance of this is frequent in the wilful and corrupt Perjuries we hear of, the impious, prophane, shocking, and, I might add, blasphemous Oaths, that we cannot pass the Streets without hearing. I wish I could add to this, that this Vice prevailed only amongst the vulgar or meaner Sort of People: But, alas! it is too notoriously known, that the Great Vulgar elegantly tag each Sentence with an Oath, which adds, as they I suppose vainly think, a Kind of Flavour or Grace to their Discourse; and the Little (you know) are apt to imitate the Great, especially in Evil.

It is not in my Power (nor I believe in yours neither, Mr. Fool), to work a Reformation, or so much as stem this Torrent of Wickedness; we can only foolishly tell them of it, and be as wisely laughed at for our Pains.

I look upon this prophane Practice of common Swearing, as the Root or Ground of most of our Public Perjuries; for how can we expect that a Person, who from his Youth would frequently call upon his Maker as a Witness to his Falsities, should boggle, when before a Magistrate, to call upon God as Witnesses to an Untruth, especially if he thinks he is in no Danger of being detected.

An Oath I take to be a solemn Appeal to the Almighty, as a Witness to the Truth of what we then assert; praying him to prosper us in this World, or punish us in the next, according as we say true or false. This I take to be the Meaning of those Words at the End of an Oath, *So help me God*. I look upon Oaths of this Kind not only lawful but necessary on some Occasions; but the too frequent Use of them at Public Offices, &c. I fear has no very good Effect. The Quaker, by the Indulgence of the Government, affirms, instead of an Oath. The Turk, as we are informed, secures his Faith to you by the Touch of his Beard; yet neither of these is scarcely ever known to falsify what is no more but their bare Word. Oh that we of the Established Church, that have some Reason to think ourselves better enlightened in the Truths of the Gospel, could, with Truth, say the same of ourselves!

If we consider the Perjury only as moral, and the Danger it is to Society, of all Crimes it may be most prejudicial. A Knot of perjured Villains combined together, may swear away the Lives, Estates, and Reputations of Numbers of honest Men, and may never be detected. Lamentable Case!

But there is one Species of Perjury but seldom taken Notice of, that is, of those who qualify themselves for Places of Profit or Honour; who take the Oaths that the Government has enjoined for its Security, but with no other View but to break them the first Opportunity, and do all they can to unhinge that Government they have sworn to support. I hope there are none such now; but there has been such, and what has been before may be again.

An honest Nonjuror, who, for Conscience Sake, refuses to

take the Oaths; and perhaps thereby suffers in his Fortune, is a Cherubim to such as these: He receives the Protection of the Government, and so he certainly ought, as long as he continues a peaceable Subject.

But for such Wolves in Sheep's Clothing as the abovementioned, (tho' I suppose there is none such, I am sure I know of none) what Punishment can be too great for one that will wilfully and premeditatedly perjure himself, that has no Force, Restraint, or Temptation to take those Oaths, contrary to his Principles, but what his Ambition prompts him to? Let such abandoned Wretches know, that if they should gain their Ends by the Means of Perjury; that the most valuable amongst their own Party will despise them, as knowing they are perjured Villains, and not fit to be trusted.

But I hope there is none such now. If there is either in City, Town, or Country, I shall apply to them what Shakespeare says on another Occasion,

Oh Heaven! that such Companions thou'dst unfold,  
And put in every honest Hand a Whip.  
To lash the Rascal naked through the World,  
Even from the East to West.

But again, if they should meet with no Punishment in this World, I would remind them, that there is a dreadful Tribunal, before which they must appear: Where no juggling mental Reservations will stand them in any Stead; and unless they repent, will have that dreadful Sentence sounded in their Ears, *Depart from me ye Wicked and false Swearers into everlasting Torments*.

I am Yours,

MEANWELL.

H A G U E, January 18.

**I**T is now certain, That the Courts of Vienna, Russia and London, have renewed their Alliance, and have added some secret Articles. The States General are earnestly solicited to become a Party in this Alliance; but when, or whether that will ever be effected, is uncertain. The Tedioussness of taking Resolutions in public Affairs, with which the Court of Vienna used heretofore to be reproached, is now become customary in our Republic. Thanks to the curried Cabal who traverses the good Dispositions of the Prince Stadtholder.

The Assembly of the States of Holland, from whom so many Resolutions were expected for the re-establishing of the Finances, and of Commerce, separated at the End of the Year without coming to any; such Power has the Cabal. The Prince Stadtholder, however, hitherto triumphs in respect to the Reduction of the Troops, which the City of Amsterdam pushed with so much Vigour, and which has not yet passed: But their High Mightinesses have at length resolved, that the Inhabitants of the East-Indies shall pay the fiftieth Penny, as well as the Subjects of the Republic in Europe. This Resolution was suspended near a Year ago, by the Opposition of the States of Zealand, who have at length agreed to it.

It is whisper'd, that the Farmers will be re-establish'd in Holland; but that in the next Assembly a Tax will be proposed to be put upon all public Employments, and a new Poll-Tax. If this Proposition should be agreed to, it would greatly increase the Murmurs and Dissatisfaction of the People, as they are not accustomed to Levies of real Money; every Thing was supplied to the Support of the State by the Farmer, and whatever the People paid extraordinary on Account of the Farms.